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ABSTRACT

An introductory speech course was revised to fit the goals of Hispanic students. Content analysis of Hispanic student comments during informal advising sessions indicated that students admire the ability to analyze audience preferences, the ability to attract listeners with melodic discourse tone, and the ability to project a professional image in terms of formal discourse. Hispanic students also wanted leadership empowerment. Six themes emerged from a review of the published research on assessing Hispanic students' academic goals: urgency, enlightened changes, self-image, the family, practical programs, and "vision." Class experiences were revised to center on pluralism instead of singularity. Exercises were developed that took into account self-image, family bonds, cooperation, and community orientation. A Language system assessment, and a scoring sheet are attached. (Contains 48 references.) (RS)

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Don't Give It To Me--Put Me Where I Can Reach It Myself: Equipping Anglos to Recognize Hispanic Student Skills in Civic Leadership Roles-- An Ethnically Focused Public Speaking Course.

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Running Head: Don't Give It To Me

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Mr. Juan Andrade (1994), Executive Director of the Midwest/Northeast Hispanic Voter Registration Project clearly focused our mission in the classroom when he said to a gathering of Hispanic political leaders in Toledo, Ohio: "Don't Give It To Me--Put Me Where I Can Reach It Myself." By these words he clearly moved the traditional speech course from "performance ortientation", to "EMPOWERMENT-ORIENTATION!"

The traditional speech course often repels an important segment of student population. Hispanic undergraduates seldom relish traditional 'Anglo' civic leadership communication skills taught therein: rapid-fire debate style of public meetings; quick summaries of opponents' points of view; brusk introductions to new topics; and monotone "objective-style" delivery. In this paper we describe how Hispanic student goals for the introductory speech course were assessed and how the course was revised to fit those goals.

During the assessment phase of our research we were given several axioms to act as benchmarks for the construction of our revised course in public speaking.

Axiom #1:
Latinos are better public speakers than Anglos.

Axiom #2:
Public speech is far more aesthetically attractive to the ear than is English.

Axiom #3:
The goal of the course is to sensitize Anglos to listen to Hispanics, not force Hispanics to sound like Anglos.

Axiom #4:
Anglos with their fractured family bases frequently miss the point and power of Hispanic family unit as a measure of meaning and a metaphor for life.

Axiom #5:
In the Western Hempisphere, Anglos are minority dwellers on the banks of what James Mitchner calls "The Spanish Lake" (the Caribbean). With the advent of NAFTA it would be wise for Anglos gracefully to embrace changes immanent in our hemisphere.

We began assessment by asking our Hispanic students for help. During informal advising conversations over the past year we would ask Hispanic students "What public speaking skills do you admire?" We asked this same question of all students entering our basic course (300 per quarter). Content analysis of responses showed us that students admired:

1. Ability to analyze audience preferences: "I can't read Anglos." "I wish they would give me more time to warm up." "They seem cold, like a judge."
2. The ability to attract listeners with melodic discourse tone: "Anglos sound like white bread." "It's really boring to listen to Anglos." "I'll bet they can't sing either."
3. The ability to project a "professional image" in terms of formal discourse: "I want people to respect me when I talk." "Some speakers look

like they belong in front of an audience."

During these conversations we would also ask students about their vocational goals. Though students showed they were interested in traditional occupations: banking, medicine, religion--a majority, especially Latinas, responded with, "I'd like to go into ... but I just can't see myself doing that." "No one in our family has ever been white collar." "They'd ask me when I was going to get a real job."

We could see from the analysis of the responses, Hispanic undergraduates wanted leadership empowerment and were frequently on target illuminating barriers to that civic progress. The question we asked was: Hispanics want to contribute to civic policy labors--true. Unclear however is, what is the color and unique sinew of that leadership vigor?

We next turned to the literature for additional help in reformatting our course. We discovered six themes in the published research on assessing Hispanic students' academic goals.

Theme I: Urgency Theme.

The national statistics sound grim if the reader is an educator dedicated to preserving the status quo. Wells (1989) tells us Hispanics are growing in number in the North American continent five times faster than non-Hispanics. Wells estimates that Hispanics will become largest minority by 2020. We see this growth by enrollment figures. In 1968 Hispanics made up 4.6 percent of nation's schools. In 1988, they were 10.3 percent. Surely if we expect such a vast change in demographics <u>not</u> to affect the way we teach, we teach in fantasy.

Sadly, Hispanics' numbers in the classroom are not parallel to Anglos' commitment to provide a quality education for them. A survey of test scores and classroom personnel shows us: Hispanics are the most undereducated segment of society; achievement scores are lower for Hispanics than whites; Hispanics are less likely to have a Hispanic teacher as a mentor; and have a higher illiteracy rate than blacks (De La Rosa & Maw, 1990). The figures are cause for alarm.

The sad victim of this neglect of curriculum design is the Hispanic student's self-image--so necessary for successful teaching. Frequently Hispanic youth are likely to perceive themselves as victims of change rather than agents of change (Ponciano, 1989). A kind of fatalistic "so what" overcomes many youth. "Don't stir things up," "I guess I didn't need to vote so bad today after all."

Fortunately Latino community leaders and authors like Bettina Flores (1994) and Juan Andrade urge youth to abandon the myths and mitotes that inhibit control of social and civic environment. Mr. Andrade tells us, "This is the thirteenth year of the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Conference. We meet in Chicago in October each year. We attract over 25,000 people--half of them under the age of 30. The complexion of this nation is changing."

How unfortunate that many educators cannot mimic that same enthusiasm. Many educators see themselves as levee keepers: hold back the tide of Hispanics wishing to drop out of school. If we can just keep them in school they won't

vant to rejoin their "former" (read, 'undesirable') culture.

Many educators think that if we just keep them in school, we are doing our job. But preventing them from dropping out is not really an acceptable motive for education. Much of the literature obsesses over the numbers of dropouts rather than the context they are fleeing. Albuquerque for academic year 1986 showed the drop out rate for whites, 6.95; blacks, 8.47; Hispanics, 9.61 (Shainline, 1987).

Even a brief survey of the numbers leads us to some disturbing discoveries. Fifty percent of the drop outs cited school-related factors to the reason for dropping out. A majority of drop outs cited dislike of teachers as a main reason for leaving school (Davis, 1990). The school was often perceived as throwing up a series of gates blocking a student's progress (Suarez-Orozco, 1989). The most frequently cited reason for dropping out was formation of a family. The most powerful reason for staying in school was that the student was above the modal age of his/her classmates (Stedman, 1988).

The typical educational response to the drop out factor is to provide more English classes for Hispanics. These inculturation techniques take a wide range of forms. "English Intensive" classes, "new comer" classes, "trailer ladies" who assist students in language development prior to mainstreaming students into the "normal" classroom (Romo, 1993). Providing students with test taking skills and study skills so they can fare better on standardized tests is presumed to meet Hispanics' educational goals (Gonzalez, 1992).

Theme II: Enlightened Changes

Some of the literature cites attempts to assess Hispanic students' goals more effectively. Offered below are innovative directions that may include rather than exclude Hispanics. Sadly, in many of these cases, the exercises were done without student assessment.

One way to remedy this problem is to educate the teachers. Staff development exercises take a wide range of forms. Too few schools took the direction of exploring ways to sensitize the staff to multicultural differences (Report, 1992). Teachers are often viewed as "angry" at students (Strodl, 1988). Thus some staff programs focus on interpersonal management of affect discourse. We wonder if Latino affect is a portion of these in-service designs.

Some in-service courses often focus on strengthening the bond between home and school (Kuykendall, 1992). Probably the most important element (the student's family) of stemming the drop out factor is addressed with programs of home visitation and parent mentoring.

Within the classroom teaching exercises need to be revised to focus on learning goals characteristic of the Hispanic community. One author, (Howard, 1989) argues that teaching strategies should always center on "cooperation exercises" that tend to be highly prized by the Hispanic students. Greater use of text-book illustrations (so parents can read the clarification technique for themselves) and more career-oriented simulations are suggested (Garcia, 1988). Sondgeroth & Stough (1992) compared successful and unsuccessful Hispanic students' descriptions of their teachers. They learned that successful students could see the goals of student exercises. They felt the

point was clear to them at the beginning of the exercise. Unsuccessful students cited the fact that their teachers often alienated them from the classroom society. Cuellar (1991) learned that the most prized teachers were those that used context bound practical applications.

Theme III: Self-Image

Some educators identify a prime direction for course assessment by asking, What is the student's self-image? Many teachers assume that Hispanics really want to be Anglos. By contrast, Hispanic students are urged to hold on to their national identity (Hidalgo, 1992). Many Hispanics are not convinced that segregation is a bad thing. They often do not see much advantage in integrating cultures (Wells, 1989). Mexican children who saw themselves as bi-literates had a higher sense of positive self-image than Anglo children who were monoliterate (Huang, 1992).

Theme IV: The Family

The family, both in the literature and in Hispanic culture is of dynamic power in forming educational goals. The power of the family is the principal reason for many students to continue their education (Clayton, 1992). Parents are frequently omitted or overlooked when beginning and educational program (Robledo, 1993). The father strongly affects the way the student perceives literacy skills (Ortiz, 1993). Parents want the term "empowerment" to color a child's education as he/she seeks to improve the community. The national government has given a high priority to the place of family in Hispanic education with its Goal 2000 Program (Hispanic children, 1989). This is also echoed in the creation of language classes to assist students in explaining their own culture to others (Petrovich & Parsons, 1989; Toward a vision, 1992).

Theme V: Practical Programs

A few programs focus on practical skills that students can learn so they may sense how they will contribute to the larger flow of society in the future. One school used students to open up and articulate the feelings of the "silent majority" of Hispanic students. One school assisted students as they formed their own focus groups to determine underlying satisfaction or dissatisfaction about the curriculum (DeVries, 1992). Another focus group charted prevailing school attitudes (Rodriguez, 1992). One campus formed college support groups to assist Hispanic students to persist in college (Flores, 1992). Other campuses used student volunteers to develop social support groups in college (Orfield, 1988). Other high school students formed a network to help parents pay for the first year of a student's college education (Chahin, 1993).

Other programs were started by community leaders themselves to supplement school curricula: community partnerships to reduce the drop out rate of Hispanics (Hispanic youth, 1990); a nationwide mentoring program of job opportunities (A special report, 1990); mentoring in the science professions (Friedman, 1990); apprentice programs to apply school skills directly to the work place (Rodriguez & Nettles, 1993); future teacher training programs aimed

exclusively at Hispanics (Mack & Jackson, 1993); enrichment programs for gifted Hispanics (Braden, 1988); and pre-high school self-image enrichment programs (Watt, 1987).

Theme VI: Vision

In creating a new curriculum, educators must see the future as their students see the future (Abi-Nader, 1988). We must realize that language is socialization in action and the technique by which our students realize the future (Trueba & Delgado-Gaitan, 1988). Students want empowered independence (Tran, 1992), participatory government (Orloff, 1993), and a community that enjoys pluralism (Vadasy, 1992).

"Since the 1960s, Latin America has been drawn increasingly into the wider world. U.S. hegemony in Latin America seemed to be on the wane. Even so, pluralism may yet be an option for Latin America. Past experience suggests that the only way to escape from dependency is to increase the options. Gabriel Garcia Marquez in his 1982 Nobel Prize acceptance speech said, '[it certainly is not] impossible to find another destiny than to live at the mercy of the two great masters of the world.'" (Skidmore & Smith, p. 381).

The Revisions

With these themes in mind, we began revising the class experiences for our students that would center on pluralism instead of sigularity.

Self-image. This proved to be the most difficult of the exercises. Principally, many students see themselves as married. And that married life is the central goal for self-image. To explore this emphasis we examined a teaching goal of "confirmation" instead of "conforming".

This exercise was used in two parts during the course. The first part was that students hypothesized "What would it take to make the audience move on this topic." Only when an audience's self-image is enhanced, will it accept direction from the speaker. Students used each other's speech topics in class to demonstrate strategies to move them toward closure.

The second part of the exercise, was to ask students what it would take to enhance their own self image to participate in the proposed speech topic. This assignment was expaned to include family units. "What would it take to encourage your father to participate in this change?" "What would it take to encourage your mother to participate in this change?" tasks in the community.

Family Bond.
One overlooked facet of leadership equipment is the remembered stories of the past. Parents are usually chief in installing these informal legends in the lives of their families. We created an assignment where students intervieved parents and grandparents on some of the treasured oral traditions such as "The legend of food mountain," "Atariba and Niquayona," "Mother scorpion country," "The invisible hunters," and "How we came to the fifth world" (Fuchs, 1991). These stories became a central core for interpreting the current events of the news corpus: "What would your Grandfather say about Tonya Harding?" The

students framed their comments with the legend.

Cooperation Exercise.
A major portion of gaining cooperation from opposing forces within the community is how one asks for cooperation. The range of that request is based on one's repertoire of "asking" tools. We created a Forms of Development exercise by adapting a circumlocution exercise from Spanish classes for English speaking students. The point of this exercise is that one feels much more in control of a context when he/she has a wide range of responses that can be used to ask for information. For example, here are many ways to ask for additional help in understanding a prior statement: Here are a set of questions asking for more information on a topic.

Como es?
Que' es...?
Quieres decir que...?
Me estas diciendo que...?
Me permites una pregunta?
Un momento, por favor, no entiendo la ultima parte.
Cuentame un poco mas, por favor.
Se mas explicito(a) por favor.
Explicamento otro vez, por favor.
No se si entendi bien. ?Es que...?
Puedes repetir lo que dijiste, por favor?
Me lo podrias explicar en otros terminos?
Mande?
(Berry-Bravo, 1993).

Students quickly learn they do not need just vocabulary, they need an understanding of the other person's world.

To this end we showed students how to identify idea as "image" for statistics, example, explanation, illustration, analogy, testimony, humor, and visual aid. We then distributed a series of news stories from Hispanic publications such as Hispanic Business. We asked students to isolate each of the forms of development in the story with color pens. These forms were then used in simulated audiences. "How would this analogy go over with the school board?" "How would the priest use this in a sermon?" "How would a training manager explain this to her/his work crew?"

Community Orientation.
This exercise has two parts. In the first part, students are to role play a Hispanic professional representing some facet of to their career goal. This professional has been asked to address one of the noon-time civic organizations (Rotary Club, Exchange Club, Lions Club) on one way their career enhances the community. To this end, students must interview a Hispanic professional working in their career area. This exercise is aimed at adjusting Hispanic students' use of "high" and "low" contextual processors (Samovar & Porter, 1991).

The second part of the exercise has students design one small simulation of community action in order to give a larger audience a sense of the impact of a civic issue. For example, students may be concerned about nutrition programs

in the community for homeless. One goal for this speech would be to persuade college peers to participate in a volunteer program at "The Kitchen for the Poor" to gain an understanding of how this organization reaches into the community. The object for this exercise is to form expectations in a reasonable and realistic dimension.

Robert Denham (1990) frames the purpose of our revised course by asking, 'What should we do when the cry in the street becomes louder than the cry in the book?" (p. 39). His answer couched in thoughts from George Steiner's Language and Silence, and Wayne Booth's The Vocation of a Teacher, argues that the liberally educated person should know something about our own nature and our place in nature, something about human achievements in the arts, and something about the effect of our own intentions in society. Future college educators need to assess the goals of our Hispanic students to learn how the complexion of our profession is changing.

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LANGUAGE SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

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Directions:

In each question below,
select the paragraph
which is easiest for you to read.
You have 8 minutes to complete this test.

Question 1:

[ ] A. You have all heard it repeated, I dare say, that people of science work by means of induction. To hear all the large words used by people of science, you might think that the man and the woman of science must be different from other men and women. To speak scientific language requires a skilled knowledge of the communication process.

[ ] B. Nature is most beautiful in spring: Lush trees in blossom, bright red and yellow tulips, cherry trees rain their blossoms on vibrant green lawns, and a brilliant golden sun drives winter shadows into retreat. Nature gives us a feast of color in spring. April and May are beautiful months of the year.

[ ] C. You are living full-time when you have feelings of energy flowing through your body (your juices are flowing) and when you feel in control of yourself. Conversely, you are living part-time when you feel "blah"--or when you experience just going through the motions or feel cheated as a result of not making an active decision concerning your feelings.

Question 2:

[ ] A. Warm is a wonderful feeling. I like to be warm: Warm at night, warm by the fire, warm in my home surrounded by family members, crowds of friends. On cold nights I love to set my electric blanket on "HIGH" and jump into a warm bed. Warm is a wonderful feeling.

[ ] B. Have a toy telephone in the room. Encourage a child to talk into the telephone as though he or she were calling his or her mother, father, or friend. The other children try to guess what the person on the other end of the line is saying by listening to the one-sided conversation.

[ ] C. The flight was perfect. It was one of the most beautiful flights I have ever taken. The sky was a clear azure blue all the way. At times, cloud banks cut off our view of the earth, but most of the way the panorama of countryside stretched out clearly below us in the bright, sparkling sun. The view was magnificent.

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Question 3:

[ ] A. But in case he took care to avoid catching anyone's eye it was understood. First of all, he had to make clear to those potential companions of his holiday that they were of no concern to him whatsoever. He stared through them, over them--eyes lost in space. The beach might have been empty. If by chance a ball was thrown his way, he looked surprised; then let a smile of amusement lighten his face, looked around dazed to see that there were people on the beach.

[ ] B. I think I needed help the first time--my knees felt uncertain. I was helped up and supported until I felt my knees were able to support me. I had a lot of sensation in my legs, especially in my knees, in my hands, and my body was extremely warm. I then had an opportunity to meet each member of the group in a way that felt very different to me. I mean, that I did not feel my whole being threatened by them. I still felt afraid. Finally, I got up by myself. Then I turned to him and felt unafraid. I hugged him briefly.

[ ] C. People come to the interview trying to find a way to say something about their interests and concerns. they usually want to talk about their positive assets and make a good impression. In many sales, management, or medical situations, people want to express ideas verbally. It is what people say and how they way it that counts in job interviews.

Question 4:

[ ] A. I must be getting better at talking because I think you can hear me new. Cathy was under the impression that it was her fault that we couldn't hear what she was saying. We found that although we were learning to listen better, it was the children that gave us more difficulty in our communication. We seemed often to hear ourselves talking at them rather than with them.

[ ] B. It is my purpose to understand how she feels in her inner world, to accept her as she is, to create an atmosphere of freedom in which she can move in thinking and feeling and being, in any direction she desires. How does she use this freedom of new found emotion?

[ ] C. The children had been doing things well all along, but we hadn't notices. We were beginning to stop and watch; our pace had slowed enough for us to see wh and what was in front of us. Danny would spot the fish swimming in the waves; Cindy had an eye for finding tiny things, as she would say, "I'm close to the ground so I can see things better."

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Question 5:

[ ] A. A space order is useful when a person wishes to report what she or he sees. The movement of the paragraph follows the movement of the eyes. That movement must have some continuity which a reader can recognize and follow. It need not start at the far left and move steadily to the far right, or vice versa, since in any view of an observer's gaze is likely to be drawn quickly to the most conspicuous object in sight.

[ ] B. This is a good game to teach listening as well as rhyming sounds to children. They should face each other in rows or across from tables. The teacher gives a word like "head." The first child rhymes with "bed." The child across from him tries to think of another word that rhymes and so on down the line.

[ ] C. It is often difficult to seek support from others. It may, for example, arouse feelings of guilt—we may think we are "imposing." It may feel like an expression of weakness or an admission of failure. It also opens up the fear we may become dependent on another person rather than self-sufficient.

In each question below,
select the word cluster
which is easiest for you to read.

Question 6:

[ ] A. witness vision sight	[ ] B. speechless tonality utter	[ ] C. unbearable pressure heated

Question 7:

[ ] A. stir sensitive hustle	[ ] B. watchful scope pinpoint	[ ] C. squeal remark oral

Question 8:

[ ] A. proclaim mention earshot	[ ] B. bearable grip hanging	[ ] C. show obvious inspect

Question 9:

[ ] A. scrutinize sketchy vague	[ ] B. tell state speak	[ ] C. tension support sore

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Question 10:

[ ] A. shrill screech ringing	[ ] B. rush panicky lukewarm	[ ] C. outlook notice hindsight

Question 11:

[ ] A. perspective picture look	[ ] B. listen say talk	[ ] C. touch grasp handle

Question 12:

[ ] A. voice sound communicate	[ ] B. firm feel concrete	[ ] C. focus clear appear

Question 13:

[ ] A. affected emotional hold	[ ] B. dream glance illusion	[ ] C. articulate conversation gossip

Question 14:

[ ] A. perceive image observe	[ ] B. hear interview loud	[ ] C. soft motion tender

Question 15:

[ ] A. vocal silence hush	[ ] B. whipped stress safety	[ ] C. perception scene view

In each question below,
select the word phrase
which is easiest for you to read.

Question 16:

[ ] A. an eyeful
[ ] B. I hear you
[ ] C. come to grips with

Question 17:

[ ] A. lend me your ear
[ ] B. calm and cool
[ ] C. bird's eye view

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Question 18:
[ ] A. hand-in-hand
[ ] B. eye to eye
[ ] C. loud and clear

Question 19:
[ ] A. get a perspective on
[ ] B. idle talk
[ ] C. heavy handed

Question 20:
[ ] A. walking on thin ice
[ ] B. in your mind's eye
[ ] C. outspoken

Question 21:
[ ] A. tongue tied
[ ] B. under-handed
[ ] C. take a peek

Question 22:
[ ] A. stare off into space
[ ] B. voiced an opinion
[ ] C. smooth operator

Question 23:
[ ] A. hang in there
[ ] B. get the picture
[ ] C. struck a chord

Question 24:
[ ] A. it rings true
[ ] B. smooth as silk
[ ] C. in view of

Question 25:
[ ] A. horse of a different color
[ ] B. word for word
[ ] C. moment of panic

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SCORING SHEET:

Count the total number of responses in each category. Actual scores based on a scale of 100 are obtained by multiplying each category by 4.

Auditory:	Visual:	Kinesthetic:
___ 1 A	___ 1 B	___ 1 C
___ 2 B	___ 2 C	___ 2 A
___ 3 C	___ 3 A	___ 3 B
___ 4 A	___ 4 C	___ 4 B
___ 5 B	___ 5 A	___ 5 C
___ 6 B	___ 6 A	___ 6 C
___ 7 C	___ 7 B	___ 7 A
___ 8 A	___ 8 C	___ 8 B
___ 9 B	___ 9 A	___ 9 C
___ 10 A	___ 10 C	___ 10 B
___ 11 B	___ 11 A	___ 11 C
___ 12 A	___ 12 C	___ 12 B
___ 13 C	___ 13 B	___ 13 A
___ 14 B	___ 14 A	___ 14 C
___ 15 A	___ 15 C	___ 15 B
___ 16 B	___ 16 A	___ 16 C
___ 17 A	___ 17 C	___ 17 B
___ 18 C	___ 18 B	___ 18 A
___ 19 B	___ 19 A	___ 19 C
___ 20 C	___ 20 B	___ 20 A
___ 21 A	___ 21 C	___ 21 B
___ 22 B	___ 22 A	___ 22 C
___ 23 C	___ 23 B	___ 23 A
___ 24 A	___ 24 C	___ 24 B
___ 25 B	___ 25 A	___ 25 C
____ TOTAL	____ TOTAL	____ TOTAL
x 4 = ____	x 4 = ____	x 4 = ____